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ABSTRACT

A general legal definition of rape is sexual intercourse forced on an individual by another against his/her will and overcoming his/her resistance. Although the female is usually referred to as the survivor and the male as the perpetrator, there are cases of male rape. Rape may be divided into stranger rape and acquaintance rape. Types of intercourse can also be depicted on a continuum from consenting sex through bribery to stranger forced rape. Date rape (acquaintance rape) can involve five types of force including making the female feel bad, pressuring for sex, refusal to take "no" for an answer, the view that sex is the male's right because of being led on, and emotional blackmail. Surveys have revealed that the frequency of date rape is high on college campuses with up to 20 percent of college women reporting that they have been raped. Underreporting of rape may be due to acceptance of violence in social settings and fear of retaliation. Counseling date rape survivors is important. The rape response includes the first acute reaction, outward adjustment, and integration or resolution. Counseling needs to address feelings of powerlessness, guilt, low self-esteem, trust, and anger. A Sexual Assault Survivors Group is beneficial for college students. Group discussions on relationships, family reactions, nightmares, self-destructive behaviors, and sexuality all help the survivors. After participation, survivors will have a new awareness of rape in society. Other college rape counseling programs focus on self-defense, assertiveness, responsible sexuality, and rape prevention. (ABL)

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Counseling Date Rape Survivors:

Implications for College Student Personnel Professionals

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Running head: COUNSELING DATE RAPE SURVIVORS

Abstract

This program focuses on the concept of date rape, its impact on survivors and the counseling interventions useful with this population. Myths and realities of why this crime is often unreported, the phases of the date rape response and how college student personnel can and should address this issue will be discussed according to a feminist perspective.

Counseling Date Rape Survivors:

Implications for College Student Personnel Professionals

This presentation will cover the impact of date rape on college students and the implication of this for college student personnel professionals. Topics covered will be the definition of rape, the scope of this crime, the impact of rape on the survivor, some counseling issues and strategies, and ways which student personnel professionals can address this issue with students on their campus.

The definition of rape varies from state to state, however, a general definition is sexual intercourse, forced on an individual by another individual against his/her will and overcoming his/her resistance. From the survivor's perspective, rape is any sexual act performed against his/her will (Robbins & Siegel, 1983).

For this presentation, I will refer to the survivor as female and the perpetrator as male; however, there are instances of male rape, by both male and female perpetrators. It has only been in the past few years that states have begun to change their laws to acknowledge that this occurs.

Rape is a very real problem in our society. It is estimated that one of every three females in the United States will be raped during her lifetime (Longo & Gochenour, 1981). Often it occurs between the ages of 15 and 24, which makes this a particularly relevant problem for college student personnel professionals (Seligmann, 1984).

Rape may be divided into two general categories: stranger rape and acquaintance rape. A more specific definition of the scope of rape is given by Adams, Fay and Loreen-Martin (1984) through their description of an eight stage force continuum. According to these authors, the

difference between rape, sexual exploitation and consenting sex is how much and what kind of pressure and force are used.

The first level of their continuum is freely consenting sex. In this relationship, both partners have equal power which is attained by the partners being of a similar age and having approximately equal knowledge and economic status.

The second level of the continuum is having sex to fulfill the other partner's need. If they are equal partners, this is consensual sex.

Economic partnership is the third level of the continuum. This exists when one person provides sex as part of a partnership agreement, for example, marriage and prostitution. Rape can occur in these situations if force is used by one partner.

Seduction is the fourth level of this continuum. Persuasion is used in this situation. The kind of persuasion used determines whether or not sex is consensual. If seduction is genuine, friendly, and a gentle show of feelings, sex is consensual if it occurs. If the seduction is bribery, force or emotional blackmail, it is rape.

Silent rape, the fifth level of the continuum, occurs if one partner gives in and has sex for fear of potential violence if he/she resists. There may be no obvious threats but the victim senses a willingness on the other person's part to use violence, and therefore, decides to go along. This situation would legally be considered rape in some states and not in others.

Bribery or coercion, the sixth level of the force continuum, involves emotional or psychological force. This is often used in relationships of unequal power. For instance, it may be used in parent/child relationships

or in counselor/client relationships.

The seventh level is acquaintance rape. This occurs when the trust of a relationship is used to get another person into a powerless or defenseless position. It is rape when force or threats are used to gain sexual contact.

Finally, stranger rape is the eighth level of the continuum. This is the most obvious situation of forced, non-consenting sexual contact. It almost always involves threatened or actual physical violence.

The last four levels of this continuum are rape. The main difference is the type of force which is used. This workshop will focus on date rape, the seventh level of the force continuum.

Adams, Fay and Loreen-Martin (1985) have defined five types of force which are commonly used by rapists in date rape. The first is an effort to make the female feel badly or immature. For example, the male might say "what's the matter, don't you like me?" Or he could say "don't tell me you're afraid of me" or "you do like men, don't you?"

The second type of force is pressuring for sex. For example, a male might say "you're not the only girl I could date" or "if you really loved me, you would do this for me." Or he might say "if you don't, I'll tell everyone you did anyway."

The third type of force is the refusal to take "no" for an answer. Comments falling into this category include "what do you mean 'no'? I just spent a lot of money on you." He might also say "you really want it, I know that. You're just saying no because you think you're supposed to."

The idea that sex is his right is the fourth type of force which might be used. The male might say "you led me on, now you have to" or "we've had sex before; you can't say 'no' now."

Emotional blackmail is the fifth type of force. Statements in this category include "this is hurting me you know. I need it. I need you." Or, "I'll kill myself if you don't go to bed with me."

Survivors may describe any of these situations. It is important to realize that any of these five types of coercion or the stated or implied use of physical force to obtain sexual favors is rape and rape is a crime.

The frequency of date rape is quite common. It is estimated that approximately one-half of all rapes are committed by someone known to the survivor (Pritchard, 1985). Date rape is especially common on college campuses. Burkhart (1984) has obtained nearly 3000 protocols of college women on which he asked them if they had ever had sexual intercourse without their consent and against their will. One in five of these women reported that she had. Their mean age was 19½. Koss and Oros (1982) conducted a study which included 2,016 college women. She received similar results. In earlier surveys, it was found that many women do not acknowledge their rape experience because they have never labeled it as such. Therefore, the questions on these surveys focus on sexually coercive behaviors.

In evaluating the data, acknowledged and unacknowledged survivors have been identified. Of the 57 percent who acknowledged a rape experience, 13 percent reported having been raped, 24 percent said a male had attempted to rape her and 18 percent reported being in situations where extreme verbal coercion was used to obtain sexual intercourse. Thirty-one percent

reported that they had been romantically involved with their perpetrator. Among the remaining 43 percent of the unacknowledged survivors, 76 percent had been romantically involved with their perpetrator. The mean age of their assault was eighteen (Koss, 1983).

Burkhart (1984) has found that 2 to 5 percent of the rapes which occur are reported. The two main reasons rape goes unreported are our greater acceptance of violence in social relationships and the survivors fear of retaliation if she reports it. The first of these reasons is supported by Holmstrom and Burgess (1983), two prominent researchers on the subject of rape since the early 1970's. According to their studies, violence has become more acceptable in social relationships. Individuals have difficulty knowing where to draw the line.

Both Burkhart and Koss have conducted surveys of college males regarding the use of physical force to compel a woman to have sexual intercourse. Koss and Oros (1982) surveyed 1,846 men. They found that 4.3 percent admitted using violence to obtain sex. These highly aggressive men were found to share the view that aggression was normal and that heterosexual relationships were a form of game playing. Another 27 percent of the men included in their survey had used lesser degrees of physical and emotional force when a woman refused to engage in sex.

A study done by Rapaport and Burkhart (1984) surveyed 201 college sophomore and junior males. Fifteen percent said they had had intercourse against the woman's will. Thirty-seven percent reported engaging in genital petting against their will and 50 percent reported unfastening a woman's clothing against her will. Only 39 percent of the 201 males denied coercive sexual involvement.

The second reason for not reporting the crime is the fear of retaliation. This is a real concern. In a college setting, the survivor may see her assailant around campus on a daily or weekly basis. She is likely to feel less threatened if she does not report it; however this does not prevent her from being raped by him again.

The availability of counseling for date rape survivors is very important. The feelings of a date rape survivor are much like the feelings of the stranger rape survivor. What often differs is the level of acknowledgement. Burkhart (1984) has identified four levels of acknowledgement. The first level is reporting it to the criminal justice system. Secondly, talking to some other authority, such as a physician, counselor or residence hall counselor. The third level of acknowledgement is to peers and the fourth level is to self.

College counselors may find that a student reveals a sexual assault experience during the discussion about some other difficulty. I've found that it is often revealed when talking about relationship difficulties. The student may not identify it as rape but may hint at it by talking about previous unpleasant relationships or she may use another person's situation as an example. If the assault has not previously been reported or reported only to friends, the survivor has had little opportunity to work through her feelings about the assault and to learn positive ways of coping with these feelings. College student personnel professionals are in an excellent position to provide support to survivors and help them learn positive actions to reduce the possibility of future assaults.

Although we may not be told about the assault until weeks or months

after it happened, it is important to have some knowledge of the rape response. The model I prefer is divided into three phases (Doweiko, 1981).

The first phase of the rape response is the acute reaction. This phase begins immediately after the attack and may last for several days. The survivor may be in shock or may feel disbelief, guilt, dismay, anger, restlessness, agitation or tenseness. She may frequently cry or sob, or she may seem very calm. There are several issues with which the survivor must deal at this time. These issues include seeking medical attention, reporting it to the police, telling family or friends, housing and transportation. The survivor should be encouraged to talk; however, she will find it very difficult to make decisions. Anticipatory guidance is a useful technique at this time.

Because date rape is frequently unacknowledged and unreported, the survivor may soon enter the second phase: outward adjustment. During this phase, she may exhibit denial, suppression and rationalization. This level represents a pseudoadjustment to pre-assault levels of functioning. It may last for days, weeks, or longer. It should not be confused with the final resolution to the assault. Counseling is not likely to be sought during this phase. Even if you have had contact with the individual during the acute response phase, she may want to terminate counseling during this phase. If counseling continues, anticipatory guidance is again a good technique.

The third phase of the rape response is integration or resolution. This phase is often begun as a result of an event which reminds the survivor of the rape. It may begin as early as six months post-assault or as late as several years post-assault. Most persons you see are likely to be in

this phase. Feelings at this time may be depression, guilt, uncleanliness, or obsessive thoughts about the assault. The survivor may feel a great need to talk about it. During this phase, she is faced with integrating a new view of herself and resolving feelings she has toward her assailant.

The feminist perspective to the process of sexual assault resolution combines therapeutic intervention skills with the underlying knowledge that sexual assault, harassment and exploitation affect all women in our society and are extensions of sexism (Yassen & Glass, 1984). Issues which may need to be addressed in counseling are powerlessness, guilt, low self-esteem, trust and anger. It is also necessary to teach self-advocacy. These issues may be addressed in individual counseling sessions or in group counseling sessions.

One method I have used to address these issues is a Sexual Assault Survivors Group (SASG). This model was developed by Sprei and Goodwin (1983) who were, at the time, working with a hospital based sexual assault center. My use of this model has been with students on a college campus.

My co-leader and I met with the group for 10 weeks, 1½ hours each week. At the first meeting we asked the participants to share their rape experience and discuss their goals for the group. The general expectation of the group was that they would be able to share their experiences and discuss their feelings in a supportive environment.

Each week we discussed several topics and asked for feedback on the previous week's session. The topics we discussed were relationships, reactions of family members to their rape, nightmares, powerlessness, fears, helplessness, self-esteem, anger, self-destructive behaviors,

self-nurturing behaviors, and sexuality. The topics of greatest concern were nightmares, anger, self-destructive behaviors and sexuality. The most emotionally charged session was the one which dealt with self-destructive behaviors.

One of the participants had used alcohol heavily for some time after her rapes. The other participant had engaged in self-mutilating behaviors and had attempted suicide. One participant continues to have nightmares. Often these increase around an anniversary date of one of her assaults. They also increase when she hears that her ex-boyfriend (her assailant) is in town or may be trying to contact her. Anger was a big problem for the other participant. She internalized her anger until it was too great to handle and then exploded in a self-destructive manner. The fourth issue, sexuality, was important to both participants. One participant was trying to deal with the issue in preparation for marriage while the other participant was experiencing problems in dating relationships.

We used Sprei and Goodwin's model as a guide for our group while allowing flexibility to meet the needs of our participants. For each topic our goal was to present positive actions the women could take to increase their power over their lives. For instance, one method suggested by Sprei and Goodwin (1983) is to wake up before the end of the nightmare or "rewind the tape" when awake and to change the ending to one of mastery. The survivor might imagine someone coming to her rescue or she may imagine fighting off and/or killing her assailant. They report that individuals who have been able to do this report feeling less afraid, more powerful and more able to fall back to sleep.

Positive expressions of anger might be to hit or kick a punching bag,

throw darts, play the piano or engage in some other physical activity. The use of successive approximations is helpful for reducing fears. Including self-nuturing behaviors in this plan is essential. Relaxation techniques can be useful for reducing anxiety. One of our group members has been involved with biofeedback training for a number of months and has found this technique to be quite helpful. Assertiveness training and cognitive restructuring can help to reduce the depressive reactions of immobility and self-blame. Learning self-defense techniques can also be a way of gaining power and dealing with fear.

After participating in this kind of group, survivors will have a new awareness of the high incidence of rape in our society and may feel a great deal of anger toward this reality. Some of them will feel a need to become involved in actively combating the problem of rape. There are sexual assault programs in more than 700 communities in the United States. A year or more after the rape, a survivor may be ready to become involved in a group where she can help other survivors. She may also become involved in a community education program or work for women's political issues. Or, as one of our group participants has done, choose a college major, such as criminal justice, and enter the field of law enforcement.

There are several methods which may be used to convey information to students about date rape. These include presentations to classes, campus organizations, and during new student's orientation, as well as articles in the campus newspaper.

Stanford University has developed a Rape Education Project which incorporates assertiveness skills and conventional self-defense. The project staff puts on annual workshops in the residence halls. The

program includes a videotape which features interviews with survivors, and a discussion about sexual attitudes and rape avoidance techniques (Barrett, 1982).

Burkhart (1984) has begun a "responsible sexuality" program at Auburn University. He is conducting a study to determine the effectiveness of this program. He is speaking to some students during freshman orientation regarding the additional sexual freedom they now have. Concerns about sexual coercion are also discussed. He plans to follow these students for two years to see if there is a reduction in sexually coercive behavior, as compared to students who did not go through the program during orientation. He is also working through the residence halls, fraternities and sororities to impress upon these groups that they are responsible for creating a different set of cultural norms.

Kansas University is involved with a Rape Victim Support Service (RVSS) which serves all residents of the county (Orzek, 1983). The services provided for the university by RVSS are reciprocated in various ways. The program is partially funded by the Kansas University Student Senate. Also, student volunteers assist the program while receiving credit for their work to satisfy requirements for a practicum experience in various programs of study. With the assistance of RVSS, rape prevention is addressed in special programs presented for university classes, dormitories, sororities, fraternities and campus organizations. The program consists of a brief introduction and the showing of one or two films. One of the films, Not Only Strangers, focuses primarily on rape by acquaintances and is relevant to college audiences.

Aside from the SASG group, other efforts to educate students at

Washburn University about rape have included several articles for the campus newspaper and date rape awareness programs to campus organizations, classes and living units.

Resources may already be available in your community which could be utilized for developing a rape awareness program on your campus. If so, I would encourage you to learn more about these resources and develop programming which includes these organizations. If resources are not available, a variety of programs have been developed specifically for college campuses, some of which I have mentioned in this presentation. Resources may be available from many of these campus programs by contacting the college or university.

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